



Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners

Office of the Commission Auditor

Legislative Analysis

**Intergovernmental, Recreation and Cultural
Affairs Committee**

Tuesday, October 12, 2005
9:30 AM
Commission Chamber

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Commission Auditor

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**Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners
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Legislative Analysis

**Intergovernmental, Recreational and Cultural Affairs Committee
Meeting Agenda**

Wednesday, October 12, 2005

Written analyses for the below listed items are attached for your consideration in this Legislative Analysis.

Item Number(s)

2B	2D & 2E
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If you require further analysis of these or any other agenda items, please contact Guillermo Cuadra, Chief Legislative Analyst, at (305) 375-5469.

Acknowledgements--Analyses prepared by:
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LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS

RESOLUTION URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO ENACT A GRANT PROGRAM FOR 311 NON-EMERGENCY POLICE AND OTHER GOVERNMENT SERVICES TELEPHONE SYSTEMS

Chairman Joe A. Martinez

I. SUMMARY

The resolution urges the Florida Legislature to enact a grant program for 311 non-emergency services. In 2001, a two-year pilot program allowed Miami-Dade County to use proceeds from the 911 fee for a 311 system. A 311 Statewide Coalition of counties and cities, which includes Miami-Dade County, is developing a legislative proposal for a Florida Non-Emergency Telephone Act, which includes a matching grant program.

II. PRESENT SITUATION

In 1997 the Federal Communications Commission reserved the 311 telephone number for the public to reach **non-emergency** police and other government services. The primary objectives of a 311 system are to reduce non-emergency calls to the 911 system and to provide the community easy access to government services.

In 2001, a two-year pilot program allowed Miami-Dade County to use over \$2 million in proceeds from the 911 fee for a 311 system. The County obtained capital financing for the 311 Answer Center through bonds for over \$18 million. The total project cost for the 311 center is over \$20 million, and the operating costs for FY 04-05 are almost \$6 million.

The Miami-Dade 311 Answer Center is housed under the Chief Information Officer. The Answer Center provides answers in English, Spanish and Creole, 5 days a week, Monday through Friday, 8 am-8 pm, and provides 24-hour information during emergency events such as hurricanes.

For more information, please refer to the recent publication "311: Your Direct Line to Local Government Service" (revised July 2005).

III. POLICY CHANGE AND IMPLICATION

The resolution maintains County policy to provide 311 non-emergency telephone service to the public.

IV. ECONOMIC IMPACT

None.

V. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

The Florida Legislature will convene in March 2006. A recently filed bill, SB 156, appropriates \$5 million from general revenue to the Agency for Health Care Administration for the expansion of the Florida 211 Network, which serves as the single point of coordination for information and referral for health and human services. There is no House companion yet.

A 311 Statewide Coalition of counties and cities, which includes Miami-Dade County, is developing a legislative proposal for a Florida Non-Emergency Telephone Act. The draft legislation includes a matching grant program administered by the Florida Department of Community Affairs, and an initial appropriation of \$10 million. This draft legislation has not yet been filed.

Attachment: draft legislation from 311 Statewide Coalition

A bill to be entitled
An act relating to 311 non-emergency
~~police~~ and other governmental services
telephone systems; creating s. 365.180,
F.S.; authorizing the Department of Community
Affairs to accept and administer funds to
provide grants for 311 non-emergency
~~police~~ and other governmental services
systems; providing for eligibility; providing
definitions; providing standards for matching
state funds; limiting the maximum amounts of
grants; granting rulemaking authority to the
department; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, in 1997 the Federal Communications Commission
authorized the use of 311 as a telephone number for "non-
emergency police and other governmental services"; and

WHEREAS, in 2001 the Legislature authorized a 311 pilot
project in Chapter 2001-133, Laws of Florida, to improve
the overall efficiency of 911 telephone systems and reduce 911
emergency response times; and

WHEREAS, ~~five~~ several counties and ~~cities~~ municipalities in
Florida have thus far implemented 311 telephone systems that
provide a single access point to non-emergency ~~police~~ and other
governmental services; and

WHEREAS, 311 alleviates congestion on 911 circuits and helps
make 911 emergency systems more efficient by diverting non-
emergency calls that could impede emergency responses; and

WHEREAS, 311 has proven to be critical during hurricanes and
other emergency situations and disasters by diverting many calls
from 911 emergency systems and keeping 911 open and available for
truly life-threatening situations; and

WHEREAS, 311 provides important information not only to citizens, but to government by providing data about the source of and the reasons for calls; and

WHEREAS, 311 can be most valuable when ~~cities~~ municipalities, counties and other state and local jurisdictions coordinate efforts to provide an integrated, seamless single source for non-emergency ~~police~~ and other governmental services; and

WHEREAS, 311 systems could provide mutual aid to neighboring areas by serving as back-up call centers under circumstances where disaster may disable local city or county communication networks; and

WHEREAS, 911 was established in section 365.171(2)F.S., "to provide rapid direct access to public safety agencies" and 211 was established in section 408.918(1) F.S., to "serve as the single point of coordination for information and referral for health and human services";

NOW, THEREFORE,

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 385.180, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

385.180 Coordinated 311 non-emergency ~~police~~ and other governmental services telephone system grant program; grants for operation; funding; approval; allocation.--

(1) The Legislature finds that a 311 telephone system for non-emergency police and other governmental services may reduce the volume of non-emergency calls to 911 Public Safety Answering Points, particularly in times of a disaster. The Legislature finds that coordinated 311 telephone systems for non emergency police and governmental services is an important part of a 911 emergency telephone system by reducing the volume of non-emergency calls to 911, particularly in times of disaster. The Legislature further finds that 311 systems improve public access to government by providing seamless access to various governmental entities, enhance coordination among state and various local jurisdictions, and improve service delivery.

(2) The ~~Division of Emergency Management of the~~ Department of Community Affairs may accept and administer funds that are appropriated to it for providing grants to counties and municipalities for the operation of a coordinated 311 non-emergency police and other governmental services telephone system.

(3) A county or municipality may apply for a grant of state funds to support the implementation and operation of a coordinated 311 non-emergency police and other governmental services telephone system.

(4) A state grant awarded under this section must be matched by a contribution from the county or municipality in an amount equal to \$1 for each \$1 awarded under this section.

(5) The Department of Community Affairs ~~Division of~~
~~Emergency Management~~ shall review each application for a grant by
a coordinated 311 non-emergency ~~police~~ and other governmental
services telephone system which is submitted under subsection (3)
and shall submit annually for approval to the Secretary of the
Department of Community Affairs a list of all applications
received and a list of the systems that are recommended for the
award of grants, arranged in order of priority. The department
~~division~~ may allocate grants only for coordinated 311 non-
emergency ~~police~~ and other governmental services telephone system
that are approved by the secretary or for which funds are
appropriated by the Legislature.

(6) As used in this section, the term "coordinated 311
non-emergency ~~police~~ and other governmental services telephone
system" means a 311 system that is multi-jurisdictional in
nature such that it is designed to provide seamless access to
non-emergency ~~police~~ and other governmental services. ~~across a~~
~~county and no less than one city.~~

(7)(a) The annual amount of a grant made under this section
may not exceed the lesser of \$2.5 million or 50 percent of the
total annual cost of operating the coordinated 311 non-emergency
~~police~~ and other governmental services telephone system. The
total amount of the grants awarded to a coordinated 311 non-
emergency ~~police~~ and other governmental services telephone system
in a 5-year period may not exceed \$10 million.

(8) No later than December 15, 2007, each 311 system that receives funding under this subsection shall submit a report to the Governor, the President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives detailing expenditure of the funds appropriated to it for the purposes of this section.

(9) The Department of Community Affairs may adopt rules prescribing the criteria to be applied to applications for grants and rules providing for the administration of this section.

Section 2. For fiscal year 2006-2007, the sum of \$10 million is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Community Affairs to fund the coordinated 311 non-emergency ~~police~~ and other governmental services telephone system grant program.

Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2006.

LEGISLATIVE ANALYSIS

2(D) RESOLUTION URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO CONTINUE AND EXPAND THE HURRICANE SALES TAX HOLIDAY

Senator Javier D. Souto

2(E) RESOLUTION URGING THE FLORIDA LEGISLATURE TO ENACT A YEAR-ROUND EXEMPTION FROM SALES TAX FOR HURRICANE SUPPLIES AND MATERIALS USED TO PROTECT PEOPLE AND PROPERTY FROM HURRICANES

Senator Javier D. Souto

I. SUMMARY

The first resolution urges the Florida Legislature to continue the hurricane sales tax holiday, and expand it to include additional hurricane materials. In the 2005 Session, the Legislature granted a 12-day sales tax holiday for certain hurricane related supplies and materials. The fiscal impact to state revenues was estimated at \$7.6 million, and a fiscal impact of \$1.7 million to local governments.

The second resolution urges the Florida Legislature to enact a year-round sales tax exemption for the expanded list of hurricane supplies and materials used to protect residential property from hurricanes.

The fiscal impact of an expanded sales tax exemption to state and local governments would greatly exceed the impact of the 2005 hurricane sales tax holiday.

II. PRESENT SITUATION

In the 2005 Session, the Florida Legislature enacted HCB 6001, which granted a 12-day sales tax holiday for certain hurricane related supplies and materials. The holiday began on June 1, to coincide with the start of hurricane season, which runs from June 1 through November 30.

The exempt items included: portable self-powered lights, portable self-powered radios, flexible waterproof sheeting, first aid kit, ground anchor or tie-down kits, gas or diesel fuel tanks, batteries, coolers, and portable generators, all under a certain price.

III. POLICY CHANGE AND IMPLICATION

The resolutions maintain County policy to support sales tax holidays to facilitate hurricane preparedness. The resolutions also urge an expansion of the sales tax exemption to include significantly more expensive materials, and for a significantly longer period of time.

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The expansion of exempt materials, to include hurricane shutters, wind-resistant windows, plywood, and building materials for hurricane safe rooms, and the extension of the holiday to year-round, greatly expands the fiscal impact of the exemption.

The purchase of some items, such as plywood and other building materials, can be intended for many other purposes, yet the purchaser can claim them as intended for hurricane preparedness.

IV. ECONOMIC IMPACT

A repeat of the existing sales tax holiday in 2006 would have approximately the same fiscal impact as the 2005: \$7.6 million to the state and \$1.7 million to local governments. Any expansion of the holiday, in terms of a year-round exemption or additional supplies or materials, would increase the fiscal impact.

V. COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS

The Florida Legislature will convene in March 2006. A recently filed bill, SB 24 provides for an expanded hurricane preparedness sales tax holiday. The bill keeps the 12-day holiday, and includes a few additional exempt items: cell phone batteries and chargers, and certain building materials, consisting of plywood and hardware, all under a certain price. The bill provides penalties for the tax exempt purchase of such building materials by construction companies, building contractors, or other commercial entity. There is no House companion yet.